

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 SCA-01
VO-03 TRSE-00 ACDA-10 DHA-02 IO-13 CU-04 /102 W
-----021003 106900 /10

R 011713Z MAR 77
FM USMISSION USBERLIN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4137
INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN UNN
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION USNATO

UNCLAS USBERLIN 0622

E.O.11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR, WB, GW, GE, US, UK, UR, FR, PGOV
SUBJECT: BERLIN REACTION TO NEW STREET-USAGE FEE FOR EAST BERLIN

REF: USBERLIN 0576

SUMMARY: IMPOSITION OF STREET-USAGE FEE ON MOTOR
VEHICLES ENTERING EAST BERLIN FROM WEST BERLIN HAS EVOKED
STRONG CIRITICISM FROM WEST BERLIN OFFICIALS AND PRESS.
EDITORIALS GENERALLY INTERPRETED MEASURE AS AN ATTACK
ON QUADRIPARTITE AGREEMENT AND CALLED FOR STRONGER WESTERN
STANCE. END SUMMARY.

2. IN TELEVISION STATEMENT FEBRUARY 26, BERLIN GOVERNING
MAYOR KLAUS SCHUETZ TERMED GDR IMPOSITION OF STREET-
USAGE FEE AS " CRUDE OFFENSE AGAINST THE SPRIRT AN CONTENT
OF WHAT WAS LAID DOWN AT HELSINKI," AND YET ANOTHER
ATTEMPT TO CHANGE UNILATERALLY THE STATUS OF
BERLIN. HE CALLED ON THE "EASTERN SIDE"TO HALT
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ITS AGITATION AGAINST THE STATUS OF BERLIN. COMPARABLE
CRITICISMS WERE VOICED BY MEMBRs OF ALL THREE MAJOR
POLITICAL PARTIES: BERLIN MAYOR WOLFGANG LUEDER
(FDP), BERLIN CDU CAUCUS CHIEF HEINRICH LUMMER, AND
BERLIN SPD CAUCUS LEADER RAINER PAPENFUSS.

3. EDITORIAL COMMENTWAS STRONG AND PESSIMISTIC.

MOST WRITERS CONNECTED LATEST MEASURE WITH TURNING BACK OF WEST BERLINERS AT EAST BERLIN CHECKPOINTS AND OTHER GDR ACTIONS TOUCHING ON BERLIN STATUS. TAGESSPIEGEL TERMED THEM COLLECTIVELY " SLOW-MOTION" AGRESSION". BERLINER MORGENPOST EXPOUNDED VIEW THAT "DOUBLE STRATEGY AGAINST THE OLD GERMAN CAPITAL IS BEING COMPLETED: EAST BERLIN IS BEING MADE THE 'WATER-TIGHT' CAPITAL OF THE GDR, DISREGARDING ALLIEDHSZQAN PROTESTS , WHILE WEST BERLIN IS TO BE ISOLATED AS AN INDEPENDENT POLITICAL UNIT WITH AN EXOTIC STATUS AND TRAINED FOR A LATER CAPITULATION." DIE WELT ASSERTED THAT THE " STRUCTURE OF DETENTE IS BEING TAKEN APART PIECE BY PIECE IN BERLIN", AND CALLED THE STREET-USAGE FEE THE " LATEST AXE BLOW AGAINST ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT SUPPORTING PILLARS OF EAST-TREATY POLITICS." " NO DRAMATIZATION IS NEEDED", WELT CONTINUED, " TO ASCERTAIN THAT THE OTHER SIDE HAS ABANDONED THE FOUNDATION FOR DOING BUSINESS (ON BERLIN)."

4. PRESS SPECULATD ON SEVERAL MOTIVES BEHIND GDR MOVE: TO RESTRICT THE NUMBER OF VISITORS TO EAST BERLIN, TO " ISOLATE AND STRANGLE" WEST BERLIN (DIE WELT), AND TO INCREASE GDR HARD-CURRENCY INCOME. MORGENPOST EMPHASIZED THE HAMMERING HOME OF THE POINT, VISIBLE IN SOVIET AND GDR ACTIONS, THAT THE QUADRIpartite AGREEMENT APPLIES ONLY TO WEST BERLIN.

5. MORGENPOST, TAGESSPIEGEL, AND WELT IMPLIED THAT UNCLASSIFIED

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COUNTERMEASURES TAKEN SO FAR AGAINST GDR ACTIONS HAVE BEEN INEFFECTIVE AND SUGGESTED A TOUGHER ATTITUDE. TAGESSPIEGEL RECOMMENDED A WESTERN CONCEPT OF RESISTANCE BE PUT IN OPPOSITION TO THESLOW-MOTION AGRESSION. ACCORDING TO MORGENPOST," IT IS BECOMING MORE AND MORE INTOLERABLE IF THE ABILITY OF THE BERLIN SENAT TO PERFORM POLITICAL NEGOTIATIONS SHRINKS AND THE IDEA CIRCULATES IN THE FRG GOVERNMENT THAT ONE CAN CURB ERICH HONECKER'S APPETITE BY FURTHER CONCESSIONS." DIE WELT WAS THE MOST FORCEFUL: " FURTHER PROTESTS AND PSEUDO-DIPLOMATIC GYMNASTICS ARE NOT ASKED FOR, BUT WAYS OUT OF THE DEVIL'S CIRCLE." IT CALLED ON THE ALLIES AND FRG TO TAKE THEM, THE BERLIN SENAT BEING STUCK IN PROVINCIAL BACK-COURT QUARRELS AND UNABLE TO TAKE THE WAY OUT ITSELF. " THE EASTERN WILLINGNESS TO ENTER CONFLICT SHOULD NO LONGER BE MET WITH CHICKEN-HEARTED (HASENHERZIGER) CONFLICT-SHYNESS," WELT CONCLUDED, " BUT WITH THE REQUISITE MEASURE OF CONFLICT-

READINESS ON OUR SIDE." AT THE SAME TIME, WELT EXPRESSED DOUBT ABOUT THE FRG WILLINGNESS TO ELIMINATE INTEREST-FREE CREDITS IN INNER-GERMAN TRADE AS A COUNTERMEASURE FOR FEAR THAT THE BERLIN TRANSIT TRAFFIC WOULD BE HINDERED REPRESSIVELY. HEINRICH LUMMER WAS QUOTED IN TABLOID BZ AS SUGGESTING THAT THE FRG SHOULD IMPOSE A TAX ON ALL GDR MOTOR VEHICLES IN WEST GERMANY.

6. TAGESSPIEGEL'S BOELKE ALSO NOTED THAT BY PEGGING STREET-USAGE FEE TO 1951 REGULATION COVERING THE GDR PROPER BUT NOT EAST BERLIN, GDR SEEMED TO BE SAYING THAT WITHOUT VERORDNUNGSBLATT, ALL PREVIOUS LEGISLATION COVERING ONLY GDR HAS NOW BEEN EXTENDED RETROACTIVELY TO EAST BERLIN.

7. ADN(EAST GERMAN NEWS AGENCY) REPORTED JANUARY UNCLASSIFIED

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25 THAT FEE APPLIES TO THOSE MOTOR VEHICLES WHICH ENTER EAST BERLIN FROM WEST BERLIN, BUT NO ATTEMPTS WERE MADE ON MARCH 1, DATE OF INAUGURATION OF FEE, TO COLLECT FROM ALLIED TRAVELLRS.
GEORGE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: GOVERNMENT REACTIONS, BERLIN QUADRIpartite MATTERS, FEES, BERLIN HIGHWAY ACCESS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 01-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977USBERL00622
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770071-0638
Format: TEL
From: USBERLIN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t197703103/aaaadnks.tel
Line Count: 144
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 1a5988ac-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 USBERLIN 576
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 09-Nov-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2946162
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: BERLIN REACTION TO NEW STREET-USAGE FEE FOR EAST BERLIN
TAGS: PFOR, PGOV, WB, GE, GC, US, UK, UR, FR
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/1a5988ac-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009